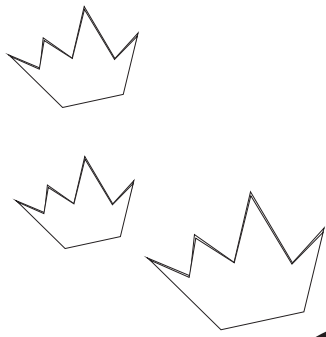


CLAM CASTLES



EVAN JACOBS





MEET THE



KING NOJRA

Age: 35

Family: a twin brother named Prince Robo

Secret Wish: to live in the world outside his video game

Favorite Hobby: cake decorating

Best Quality: great hair

CHARACTERS



JAKE

Age: 11

Favorite Food: Hot Pockets ham & cheese

Second Favorite Hobby: taking photographs of funny-looking bugs

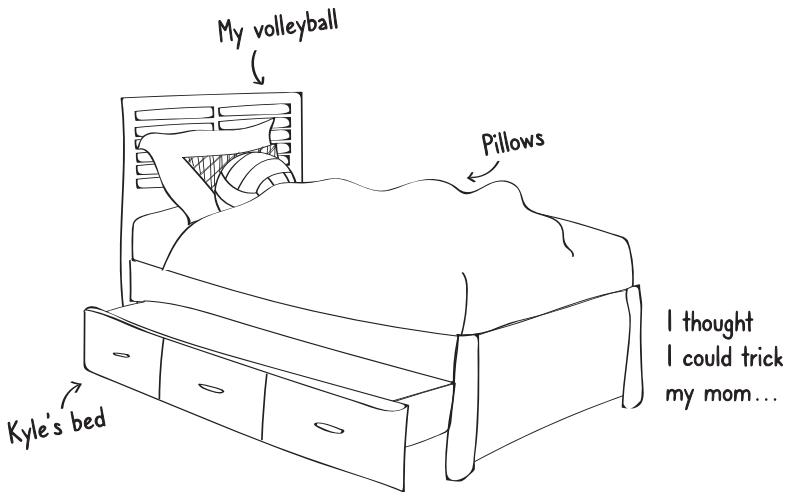
Biggest Secret: has a crush on Olivia, the girl who sits behind him in art class

Best Quality: persistence

1 UNLOCKED

“You boys better get in bed. Right now!”

Jake’s mom was mad. She had already told them to go to sleep. That was two hours ago. But Jake and his best friend, Kyle, kept playing.



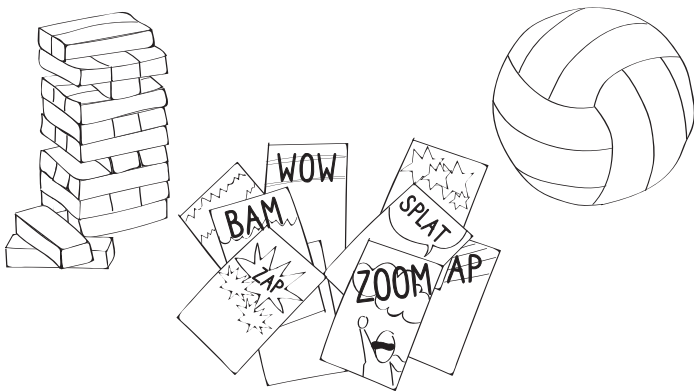
“Three more minutes, Mom. I promise,” Jake said. “We’re almost done. This is Level 99!”



“Fine. But that’s it. You boys are lucky it’s Friday.” She shut the door to her bedroom.

Jake lived in a small one-story house. The living room was next to his parents’ room. His brother, Mike, was down the hall. Jake had his own bedroom. It was full of stuff. You name it, Jake had it. He had games, comic books, DVDs, and electronics.





Jake and Kyle had been on the Xbox all night. The boys always played when Kyle slept over. They were seconds away from clearing the last level of their favorite game. It was called *Clan Castles*.

They battled a king at each level. Winning meant they won the king's castle. The final battle was against King Nojra. Nojra was the fiercest and scariest king. He was the bravest too.

King Nojra was half-man, half-dragon.



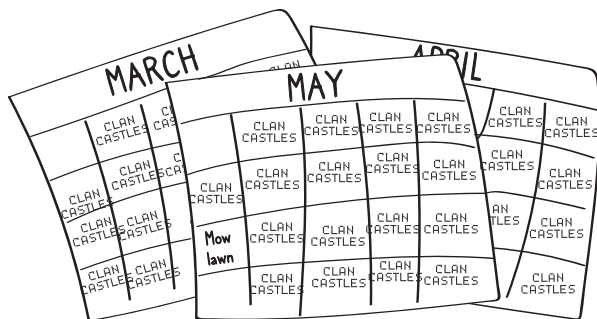
He ruled the biggest kingdom. If you lost to him, you lost it all. You were bumped back to Level 1.



Jake's character and King Nojra were fighting. Nojra was throwing fireballs. Giant creatures were on the attack. The king's great hall was a war zone. Other kings watched. They were the ones Jake and Kyle



had already beaten. It had taken the boys months to get this far.



“If you die, it’s over,” Kyle said.

“Don’t remind me,” Jake moaned.

Since *Clan Castles* was a kids’ game, nobody really died. Losing meant you started over. That would be terrible.

King Nojra was using all his skills. Jake had to be fast. He had to move and fire at the same time. The king kept at it. If Jake blinked, he’d lose.

Then a sound came from the game.

“What’s going on?” Kyle asked.

At that moment, the Mirror of Reflection appeared. It sat off to the side. A counter appeared on the screen.

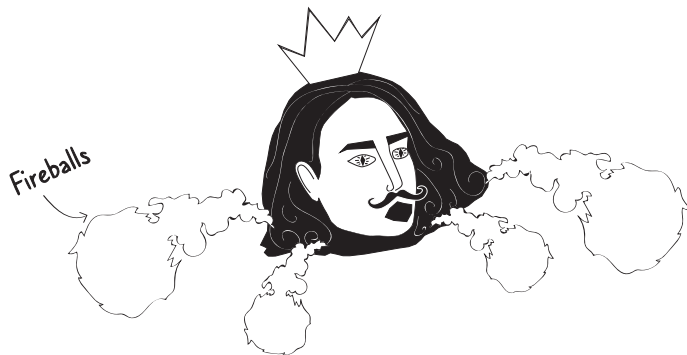
“I only have five seconds!” Jake was so tense. He was sweating.

If he did not get the mirror, it would disappear forever.

Too much was coming at him. Jake was stuck.

Suddenly, he got a break. For a split second, there was an opening. Jake took it.

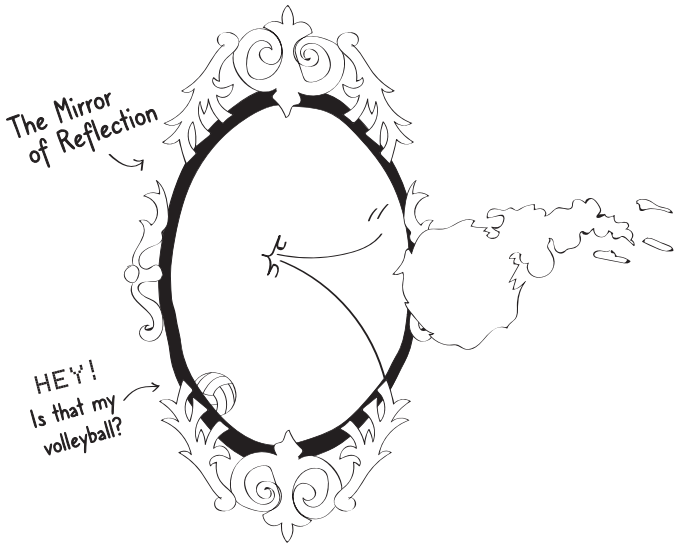
Two seconds were left. He grabbed the mirror. Nojra spit out a fireball.



“Lift it!” Kyle yelled. “Now!”

Jake did.

The fireball bounced off the mirror. It shot back into Nojra’s body.



“Direct hit!” Kyle cried.

Nojra vanished. There was a white light.

Then the screen went black.

“Whoa! You beat Level 99!” Kyle put his arm around Jake.



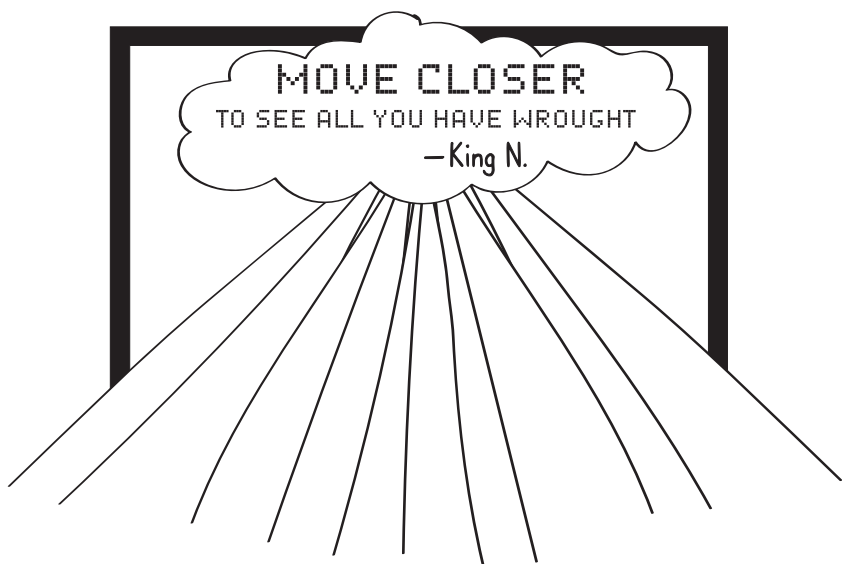
“Now what?” Jake asked.

The screen was still black. They waited.
It was dead quiet.

Suddenly, bright colors filled the TV screen. Every king they had beaten appeared.

“Cool,” Jake said.

The screen read:



They stepped forward.

A white light shot out of the TV. It was the same light as when Nojra vanished.

Jake and Kyle looked at each other.

“We’re moving!” Jake yelled.

In seconds, colors surrounded them.

The TV had sucked them in!

